

Amendments to the Claims

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A utility meter incorporating standard meter industry data structures including security data table parameters, the utility meter comprising:

a security component for determining whether an externally generated access key is the same as an internally generated access key; and

a bypass component for enabling a data access operation by an external device without reference to the security data table parameters included within the utility meter.

2. (Original) The meter of claim 1, the security component further comprising:

a security key generator for generating a security key.

3. (Original) The meter of claim 2 wherein the security key generator generates the security key from variable data and data associated with the meter.

4. (Original) The meter of claim 3 wherein the security key generator arithmetically combines the variable data and the data associated with the meter to generate the security key.

5. (Original) The meter of claim 2, the security component further comprising:

an access key generator for generating an access key from the security key.

6. (Original) The meter of claim 5 wherein the access key generator augments the security key before generating the access key.

7. (Original) The meter of claim 5, the security component further comprising:

An access key comparator for comparing the access key generated by the access key generator to an access key received from an external device.

8. (Original) The meter of claim 7, the bypass component further comprising:
a data access monitor for monitoring data access operations performed by the external device and resetting the access key comparator in response to a data access being performed by the external device.
9. (Original) The meter of claim 8, the bypass component further comprising:
A unlock timer for timing an interval corresponding to a data access operation and for resetting the access key comparator in response to a data access being performed by the external device.
10. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the bypass component enables a single data access operation by the external device.
11. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the security component and bypass component are implemented by a procedure.
12. (Original) The system of claim 11 wherein the procedure is a computer program executed by a processor in the utility meter.

13. (Currently amended) A method for modifying a read-only table in a utility meter incorporating standard meter industry data structures including security access tables, the method comprising:

receiving a request for a security key with a security component of the utility meter;

generating a security key with the security component;

generating an access key from the security key with the security component,

wherein the generated access key is generated within the utility meter;

comparing the generated access key to an externally generated access key with the security component; and

enabling a data access operation to occur without reference to the security access tables included within the utility meter with a bypass component of the utility meter.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, the security key generating including:

arithmetically combining the variable data with data associated with a utility meter to generate the security key.

15. (Original) The method of claim 13, the access key generation including:

augmenting the security key before generating the access key.

16. (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein the data access enabling includes:

monitoring for a data access operation by an external device in response to the comparison of the access keys being the same.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the data access enabling includes:

timing a data access interval; and

resuming security processing with reference to security tables in response to the data access interval time expiring.

18. (Original) The method of claim 13, the access key generation including:
generating the access key with an encryption function.
19. (Original) The method of claim 13, the access key generation including:
generating the access key with a hashing function.
20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of
performing a data access operation without reference to the security tables.
21. (Previously presented) The utility meter of claim 1 wherein the standard meter
industry data structures are ANSI C12.19 data structures and the security data table parameters
are Decade4 table parameters.
22. (Currently amended) A utility meter incorporating meter table data structures
including security table parameters, the utility meter comprising:
a security key generator configured to generate a security key;
an access key generator configured to receive the security key and generate an
internal access key;
a security component configured to compare an externally generated access key to
the internal access key; and
a bypass component configured to enable a data access operation by a device
external to the utility meter without reference to the security table parameters included
within the utility meter.